

REMARKS

This Amendment is responsive to the Office Action dated February 20, 2004. In that Action, the Examiner objected to claims 103 and rejected claims 1-8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by DeRees. Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection of the claims and offers the foregoing amendments and following remarks in support thereof.

Claims 1-8 have been amended by this Amendment. Claims 9-20 have been added. No new matter has been inserted. Claims 1-20 remain pending in the application. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the Examiner's rejections.

Claim 1 has been amended to overcome the Examiner's objection by adding the word "front" to line 1 of the preamble.

Independent claims 1, 4 and 8 have been amended to claim that the rear quarter panel in a closed position basically extends from the rear end of the vehicle frame to the front door of the vehicle. DeRees discloses a non-conventional rear door assembly for a vehicle. The DeRees rear door is separate from the rear quarter panel which in DeRees is conventional. Thus, DeRees shows four vehicle doors, and a conventional rear quarter panel. The DeRees quarter panel does not move. Applicant's invention provides a novel rear quarter panel that also extends to the area of the vehicle normally occupied by the rear doors of the vehicle. No rear doors are needed, as the rear quarter panel is movable with respect to the vehicle frame in a variety of configurations which provide "rear door" like access to the rear seat area of the vehicle. "Rear door" like access refers to similar access to that provided by conventional rear vehicle doors. The newly added dependent claims provide further distinguishing features of Applicant's invention from the invention disclosed in the DeRees reference. Accordingly,

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Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's Section 102(b) rejection and respectfully requests that such rejection be withdrawn.

Applicant has completely responded to the Office Action dated February 20, 2004. Favorable action is respectfully requested.

Applicant is also enclosing a copy of its previously filed Request for One Month Extension of Time for the above-identified application.

Any additional charges, including Extensions of Time, please bill our Deposit Account No. 503180.

Respectfully submitted,



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